

Technology and 21st century skills are intrinsically related as well, in that learning 21st century skills requires the use of technology. Information, media and technology skills themselves are one set of 21st century skills—and technology supports the learning of other 21st century skills, including critical thinking and problem solving; communication and collaboration; and creativity and innovation. Conversely, maximizing the use of technology requires applying a good number of the skills articulated by proponents of 21st century skills.

Walden University's Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership's nationwide survey of classroom teachers, principals and assistant principals addresses five myths:

### Myth 1

Teachers who are newer to the profession and teachers who have greater access to technology are more likely to use technology frequently for instruction than other teachers. In reality, veteran teachers are

just as likely as newer teachers to use technology to support learning. And lack of access to technology does *not* appear to be the main reason why teachers do not use technology.

### Myth 2

Only high-achieving students benefit from using technology. In reality, both teachers and administrators believe that technology helps them engage many different types of students, including high-achieving students, students with academic needs and English language learners.

### Myth 3

Given that students today are comfortable with technology, teachers' use of technology is less important to student learning. In reality, teachers' use of technology matters a great deal. Teachers who use technology frequently to support learning in their classrooms report greater benefits to student learning, engagement and skills from technology than teachers who spend less time using technology to support learning. Teachers

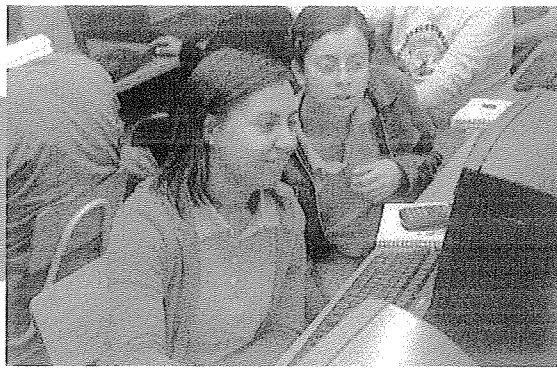
who are frequent technology users also put more emphasis on 21st century skills—and report more pronounced effects on student learning of these skills.

### Myth 4

Teachers and administrators have shared understandings about classroom technology use and 21st century skills. In reality, there are disparities between teachers' and administrators' perceptions of support for classroom technology use, as well as in their perceptions of the impact of and their emphasis on 21st century skills. Administrators believe that teachers are using technology to support learning more than teachers report that they actually do. Administrators also have somewhat stronger perceptions about the positive impact of technology use on student outcomes.

### Myth 5

Teachers feel well prepared by their initial teacher preparation programs to effectively incorporate technology into classroom instruction and to foster 21st century skills. In reality,



most teachers do not believe that their pre-service programs prepared them well in either technology or 21st century skills. Teachers place more value on advanced training programs. The findings suggest that on-the-job technology training for teachers may focus on how to operate

new equipment, but not on how to incorporate it effectively into instruction. Education, training, professional development and leadership support make a difference in teachers' use of technology and in their emphasis on 21st century skills.

This report is addressed to teachers, school administrators, higher education institutions and policymakers at the local, state and national levels. The report includes insights from school administrators and teachers and excerpts from extensive interviews with educational experts.

## Defining Terms: "21st Century Skills"

In this survey, the term "21st century skills" refers to the set of skills identified by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, the key national organization focused on infusing 21st century skills into education. The Partnership's Framework for 21st Century Learning proposes these 21st century student outcomes:

### Core Subjects

- English, reading or language arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- History
- Geography
- Government and civics
- Economics
- World languages
- The arts

### 21st Century Themes

- Global awareness
- Financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy
- Civic literacy
- Health literacy
- Environmental literacy

### 21st Century Skills

- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Creativity and innovation
- Information, media and technology skills
- Life and career skills, such as flexibility and adaptability
- Initiative and self-direction
- Social and cross-cultural skills
- Productivity and accountability
- Leadership and responsibility

#### Source:

Partnership for 21st Century Skills  
[www.21stcenturyskills.org](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org)